

Remarks

Claims 3-9 were amended, and claims 1-18 are pending. In light of the forgoing amendment and following remarks, the applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the pending objections and rejections, and advancement of this application to allowance.

A. Preliminary Matter

The applicant notes that an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) was filed on May 5, 2003, but the office action did not include an initialed copy of the form 1449. The applicant kindly asks for an initialed copy of the form 1449 that accompanied the IDS.

The applicant amended claims 1, 2, 12, and 15 to clarify the originally intended scope of the claims in which the claimed MEM switch has a combination of an impedance-controlled signal path and a coil for actuating the switch. These amendments are intended to be clarifying and within the originally intended scope of the pending claims.

B. Drawings

The office action notes that new corrected drawings are required. The applicant has enclosed formal drawings herewith.

C. Objection

An objection was entered against claims 1 and 3-9 because claim 1 refers to first and second microstrips and claims 3-9 refer to a microstrip. The applicant thanks the examiner for pointing out this informality and has amended the claims to correct it. The applicant made a similar amendment to claim 12. These amendments are intended to be clarifying and within the originally intended scope of the pending claims.

The applicant requests withdrawal of the pending objection.

D. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that the applicant regards as the invention. The applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The applicant notes that M.P.E.P. § 2173.05(d) concerns setting forth examples and preferences (e.g., "R is halogen, for example, chlorine") in the body of a claim. Such terms are indefinite because it is not clear whether the example is truly an example or a narrowing limitation.

In sharp contrast, terms such as "about" are terms of degree that one skilled in the art recognizes and are sufficiently definite because it is unambiguous that the subject of the adjective is a narrowing limitation. See M.P.E.P. § 2173.05(b). Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the pending rejection.

E. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 15-16 stand rejected as being anticipated by Ruan et al. (United States Patent 6,496,612). The applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 sets forth first and second microstrips each having an impedance of about 50 Ohms. A microstrip is a controlled-impedance transmission line for microwave or other high-frequency signals. This claimed structure has several advantages over the cited reference. For example, it provides a switchable controlled-impedance transmission line for high-frequency circuits, which reduces the insertion loss and return loss for high-frequency signals. As a result, the claimed microstrips also improve the signal-to-noise (S/N) ratio for the MEM switch.

In sharp contrast, Ruan et al. merely discloses contact pads (10, 110, 408, 508). It fails to teach or suggest that the latching relay structure 100 includes any microstrips. Therefore, the applicant respectfully submits that the Claim 1 is patentably distinct over Ruan et al., and requests withdrawal of the pending rejection.

Claims 15 and 16 also set forth first and second microstrips. Again, Ruan et al. fails to teach or suggest a structure having microstrips. Therefore, the applicant respectfully submits that the Claims 15 and 16 are patentably distinct over Ruan et al., and requests withdrawal of the pending rejection.

F. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3-12, 14, 17, and 18 stand rejected as being obvious in view of Ruan et al. The applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 3-12, 14, 17, and 18 set forth first and second microstrips, which are controlled-impedance transmission line for microwave or other high-frequency signals. Ruan et al. discloses only contact pads and fails to disclose a microstrip. Nor does Ruan et al. teach or suggest that the latching relay 100 is suitable for conducting high-frequency signals. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention is patentably distinct from the cited references and withdrawal of the pending rejection.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicants request withdrawal of the pending objections and rejections and issuance of a notice of allowance. The applicants note there may be reasons and arguments that the claims are patentably distinct from the cited references in addition to those set forth herein. The applicants reserve the right to raise any such argument in the future and to pursue any claim scope supported by the disclosure set forth in the application.

Please contact the undersigned attorney if there are any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

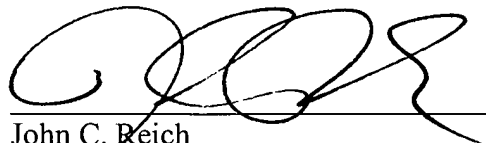
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